

Sri Sarada is worshipped in the temple (extreme right), which was originally an unpretentious structure with her image made of sandal-wood. Sri Vidyaranya, the 12th Acharya, renovated the temple in the 14th century and installed the present image in gold. The tiled roof he gave existed till about 1907 when the 33rd Acharya decided to have a more substantial building erected in its place. The work he began was finished by his successor H. H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati, who performed the kumbhabhisheka in 1916.

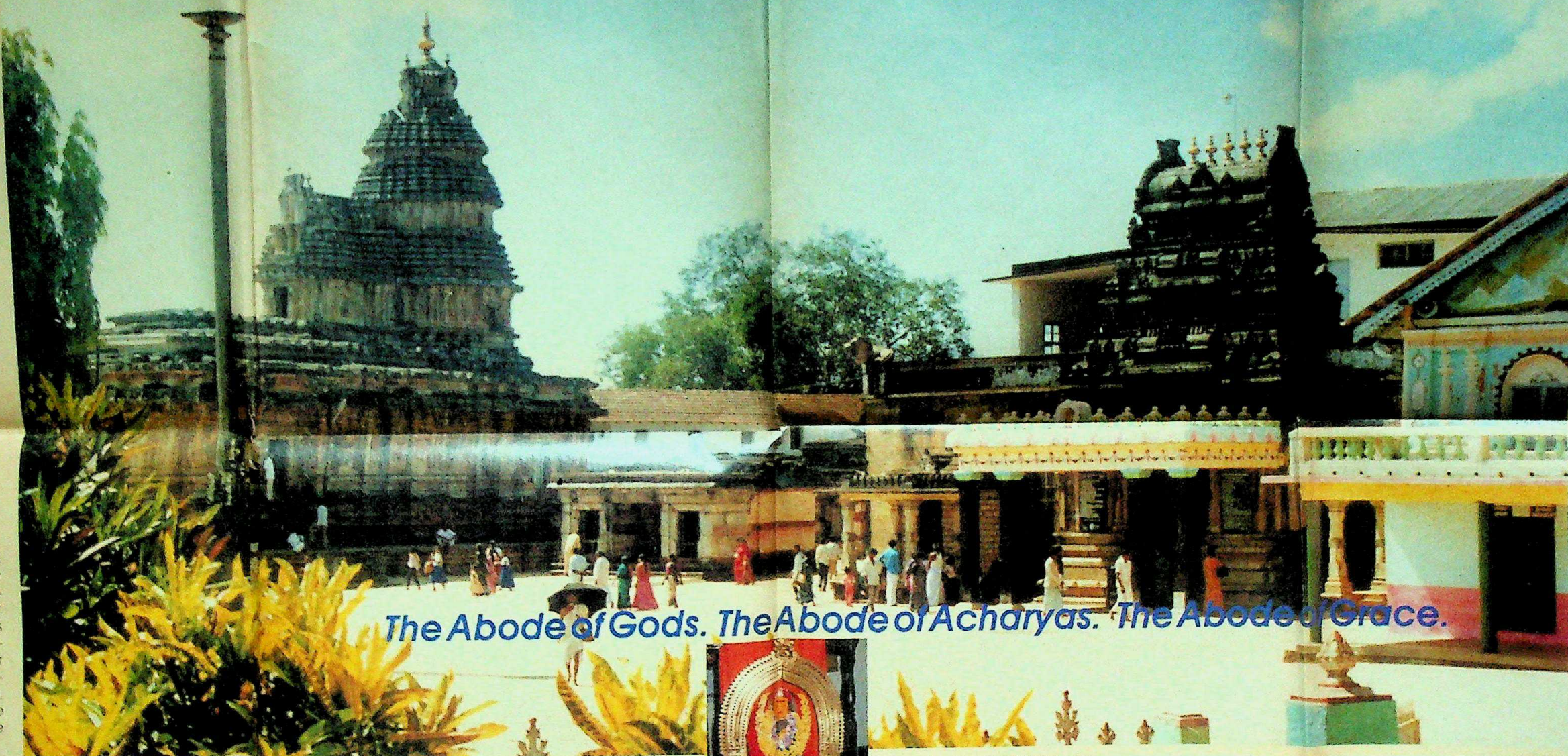
Next in importance to the temple of Sri Sarada is the temple of Sri Vidyasankara. Known for its architectural excellence, it was built in 1346 A. D. in Dravidian and Hoysala styles. It is the *adhish-tanam* of Sri Vidya Tirtha Mahaswamikal, the 10th Acharya of Sringeri Pitha. It contains in finely carved stones the essence of Yoga Sastras, Astronomy and every other subject of practical interest.



Anjaneya

When Sankara established his matha at Sringeri, he first built four guardian temples on the surrounding hillocks, which were to protect the village from dangers, diseases and the forces of evil. On the eastern hillock, he built a temple for Kala Bhairava, on the west for Anjaneya, on the south for Durga, and on the north for Kali. Pujas are still being continued at these temples.

SRINGERI



The Abode of Gods. The Abode of Acharyas. The Abode of Grace.



Durga



The *adhish-tanam* of Their Holinesses Sri Sacchidananda Sivabhinava Narasimha Bharati and Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati



Kali

The main hall of this temple has 12 pillars on which are marked the 12 signs of the Zodiac. Rays of the sun fall on them in the order of the solar months, i.e., only on a particular pillar for each month of the year.

The matha compound is studded with a large number of other temples. There is an ancient temple dedicated to Maha Vishnu or Janardana. The temple of Adi Sankaracharya is located in the quadrangle of the old matha building. The smaller temples are mostly *samadhis* of the previous Acharyas in which *lingas* have been installed and are being worshipped.



Kala Bhairava

Crossing the Tunga river by a newly built suspension bridge, one can reach Narasimhavada, once an unkept forest, now a habitable garden—the abode of the Acharyas. It is here that the present Holiness, Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamikal, gives *darshan* to the devotees and performs the puja of Sri Chandramoulisvara to the Vedic chanting of the pandits.

The *adhish-tanams* of the previous Acharyas—His Holiness Sri Sacchidananda Sivabhinava Narasimha Bharati, H. H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati, and H. H. Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamikal—are also situated in Narasimhavada. The *adhish-tanams* of the 33rd and 34th Acharyas are shown below.

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The Origin of Sringeri Sarada Pitha

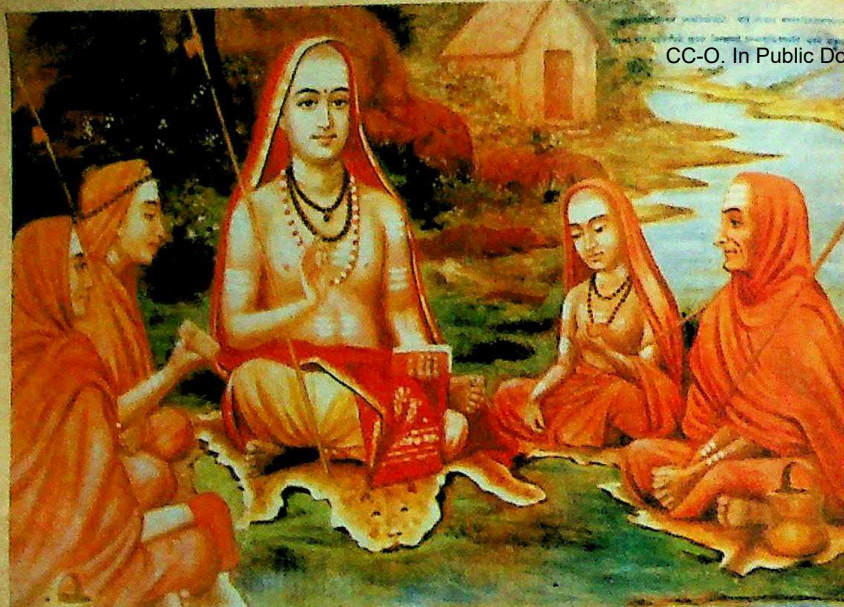
Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada is the august founder of the Sringeri Sarada Pitha in Karnataka. To this day, the Pitha shines as a beacon-light to seekers of spiritual knowledge.

At Sringeri, he saw a strange sight on the bank of River Tunga. A serpent was protecting a pregnant frog with its outstretched hood from the scorching heat of the sun.

Overwhelmed by the sight of vicious foes being compassionate friends on this land, he decided to establish the first pitha at Sringeri.

Here, he spent 12 years teaching philosophy to his disciples. The serenity of sacred Sringeri is there for anyone to see even today.





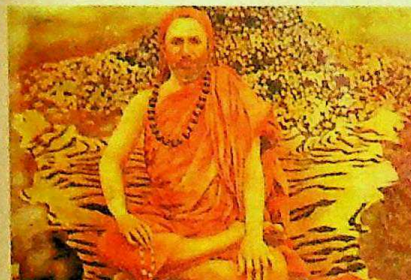
Adi Sankara and his four disciples



H. H. Sri Sureshwaracharya



H. H. Sri Vidyananya



H. H. Sri Sacchidananda
Sivabhinava Narasimha Bharati



H. H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati

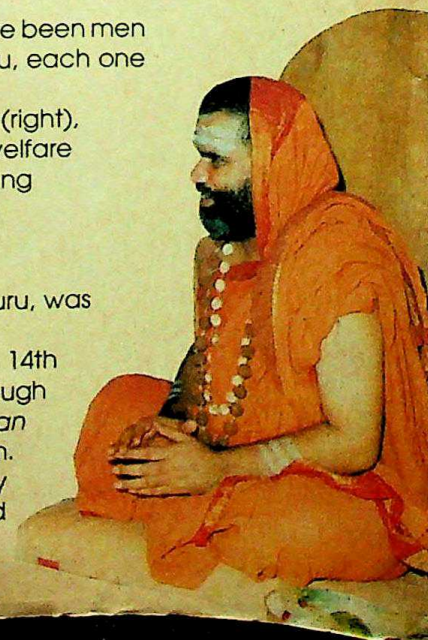
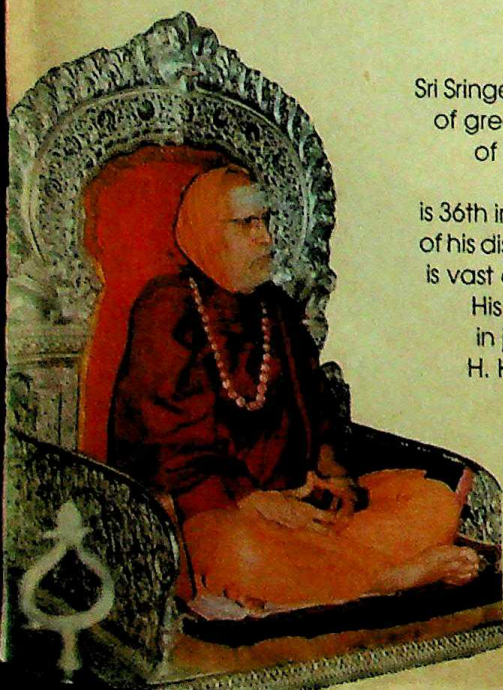
Guru Parampara

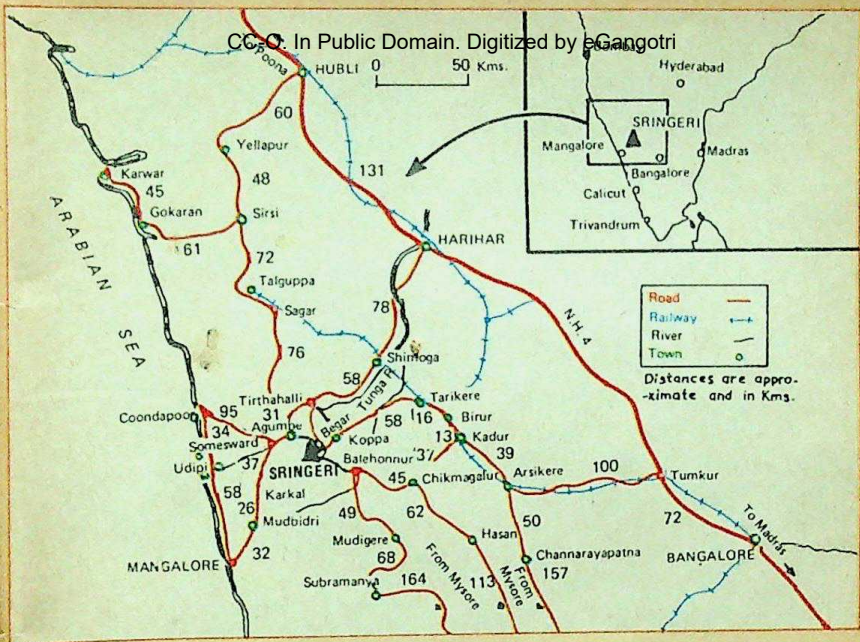
Sri Sringeri Sarada Pittha has had a continuing line of succession of Acharyas. They have been men of great erudition, spiritual attainment and compassion. Known as the Jagadguru, each one of them has added to the lustre of the Pittha.

The present Acharya, His Holiness Jagadguru Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal (right), is 36th in the line of succession of Sringeri parampara. He is always engaged in the welfare of his disciples and devotees. His knowledge of the scriptures is unparalleled. His learning is vast and spiritual attainment immense. He was initiated into *sannyasa* in 1974 by

His Holiness Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha (left), under whom he mastered the *sastras* in just eight years. He is a linguist, full of compassion and easily accessible. H. H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati, the well-known *jivanmukta* and 34th Jagadguru, was nominated by H. H. Sri Sacchidananda Sivabhinava Narasimha Bharati.

The Pittha attained eminence during Saint Vidyananya's reign in the 14th century. He was instrumental in establishing the Vijayanagar *samraj* through Harihara and Bukka. The matha was raised to the status of a *samsthan* by which the rulers conferred with the Acharyas in their administration. Sri Sureshwaracharya (top left) was the first head nominated by Adi Sankara for the Sarada Pittha. He was a direct disciple who attained name and fame for his many works, including *Naishkarmya-siddhi* and *Manasollasa*.





How to Reach Sringeri

Sringeri is a serene and picturesque pilgrim centre in the plateau of the Western Ghats. Situated on the banks of River Tunga in Chikmagalur district, Karnataka State, it is about 96 Km from the nearest railway station, be it Birur or Shimoga. It is 107 Km from Mangalore on the west coast.

There are buses frequently plying from these places to Sringeri. Buses also run between Sringeri and Bangalore, which is about 320 Km south east of Sringeri. Though arduous, the journey is enjoyable through the undulating hills and thick forests. Sringeri is also close to other pilgrim centres, such as Udupi, Subrahmanya and Dharmasthala.

All vexations of the road are forgotten once you reach Sringeri. The enchanting scenic beauty, the refreshing bath in the cool waters of the Tunga, darsan of Goddess Sarada, and the gracious blessings of the Acharya leave you with sublime feelings. The matha maintains a Dharmashala and several guest houses for visitors' convenience.

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Sri Sarada Devi

Sri Sarada Pitha

Adi Sankara installed an image of Sri Sarada over a Sri Chakra engraved on a rock on the left bank of River Tunga. It is the abundant grace of Sri Sarada, the presiding deity of the Pitha, that has enabled each guru to nominate his successor and ensure an unbroken succession over the past 1,200 years.

Sarada represents the aspect with form of the Supreme Absolute. She displays in her hands the symbol of a jar full of the nectar of immortality.

a book signifying the highest knowledge, a rosary with beads standing for the *bijas* from which the gross form of the universe emanate, and the *chinmudra* showing the awareness of the identity of the jiva with Brahman.

The Crystal Linga

Since the days of Adi Sankara, the Acharyas have used for daily worship a *spatika linga* (crystal) of Lord Chandramoulisvara and a *murti* of Ratnagarbha Ganapati, carved out of a small block of crystal with a ruby in the middle.

The self-radiant moon which charac-



**Spatika Linga--
Sri Chandramoulisvara**

terises the spotless *spatika linga* is a phenomenon not to be seen anywhere else. It is believed that the *linga* from Kailas was given to Sankara by Lord Visveswara at Kasi. It is awe-inspiring to see the Acharya worshipping the *linga* and *murti* with great care and devotion at the

matha. When he goes on tour, the two *murtis* are carried with him for puja and for bestowing welfare to the devotees.

Stambha Ganapati

Visitors have been drawn to a strange phenomenon at the ancient hill temple of Lord Malahanikaresvara in the heart of Sringeri town. A stone pillar at the entrance sounds hollow at the back and has a protrusion in the front. This resembles the figure of Sri Ganesa and is worshipped daily at the temple.



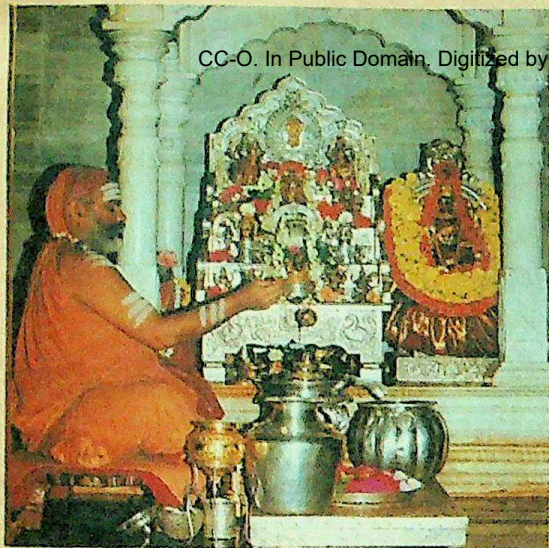
**Sri Ratnagarbha
Ganapati**

When H. H. Sri Abhinava Narasimha Bharati, the 24th Acharya in the early 17th century, visited this temple for the first time, he noticed the absence of any Ganesa image. Immediately taking up a piece of turmeric, he drew an outline of Ganesa on the pillar and offered puja. Ever since then, the *murti* of Sri Ganesa has been slowly but steadily bulging out in full relief making the granite stone hollow inside.

The Stambha Ganapati and Lord Malahanikaresvara are worshipped by the present Acharya on several occasions, such as Maha Sivaratri. Several other festivals are also celebrated at Sringeri, including Sankara



Stambha Ganapati



H. H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal doing puja to Sri Chandramoulisvara.

himself in ceremonial dress, following a tradition started by Sri Vidyanaraya.

Ganesh Chaturthi

H. H. Sacchidananda Sivabhinava Narasimha Bharati established the practice of holding a *Vidvat Sadas* during Ganesh Chaturthi festival, which is continued every year. On this occasion, pandits and scholars debate on the various branches of Sastras. The Acharya presides every day during the 10-day discussion and reconciles conflicting points of view to the satisfaction of the audience. The discussion takes place in Sanskrit.

Service Institutions

Sringeri has now grown into a great centre of knowledge and learning. A great service in the form of Vedic and Sanskrit education is carried out on *gurukula* basis at Sringeri. Already the *gurukula* has produced two great Jagadgurus in our living memory—H. H. Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha and his guru, H. H. Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati, both revered *jivanmuktas*.

The subjects include: *Vyakarana*, *Jyotisha* and *Mimamsa*, *Tarka Sahitya*, *Vedanta* and *Ra* and *Yajur Vedas*. About 10 profes-

Jayanti, *Vyasa puja*, *Venaklakshmi Vratam*, *Vamana Jayanti*, *Vidya Sankara Car Festival*, *Sri Rama Navami*, *Ratha Saptami* and *Subrahmanya Shashti*.

Navaratri is the most important festival in Sringeri. Special pujas and archanas are offered to Sri Sarada at the temple for nine days. A ceremonial procession takes place in the temple. His Holiness performs *Sahasranama puja* to Devi Sarada every day and sits in *darbar* at night adorning



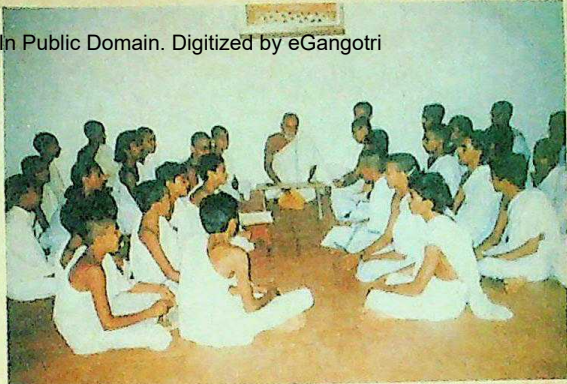
The present Jagadguru H. H. Sri Bharati Tirtha in darbar dress.

sors and lecturers carry out the teaching. The number of students now total about 100. 1995 will mark the centenary year for the institution.

The Sringeri Pitha has a library which contains numerous rare works of Adi Sankara, palm leaf manuscripts, ancient and handwritten books on Vedas, Vedangas and all branches of

Sastras. The records accumulated over the centuries of the correspondence between the Pitha and Maratha and Vijayanagar rulers and others make a formidable collection in the library.

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The Vedic Pathasala of the gurukula type.



Sri Maha Ganapati Vakyartha Sadas

Kannada and Malayalam. Magazines in English include *Tattvâlaka*, a bi-monthly dedicated to truth and moral excellence under the guidance of the Jagadguru. *The Greatness of Sringeri* is another new publication of the matha, which deals with the life and achievements of 36 sages of the Sringeri Sarada Pitha.

The Sharada Dhanvantari Hospital is a boon to the poor. Started by H. H. Sri Abhinava Vidyatirtha, it is a modern hospital with sophisticated equipment. In the words of His Holiness, it is developing like "the moon in the *suklapaksha* with liberal contributions from various devotees and institutions in India and abroad."

The Pitha has a number of branches at various places of pilgrimage all over India.



Book Centre, Sringeri

The Sharada Dhanvantari Hospital at Sringeri.